1: Freeman E-5 (1949-1951)1955 OC6 Iban OC6

Introduction

121 IN September, 1948, I was appointed to undertake anthropological research in Sarawak under the auspices of the Colonial Social Science Research Council. The Secretary of the Colonial Social Science Research Council laid down as follows the nature of my research work: "a study of a traditionally based, stable, Iban community based on shifting dry rice cultivation and not subject to undue land shortage . . . . as described in 'A Report on the Possibilities of a Social Economic Survey of Sarawak,' by Dr. E. R. Leach".[1]

114 I arrived in Sarawak in January, 1949, and remained in the Colony until June, 1951. For most of this period I was working among the Iban of the Baleh region of the Kapit District of the Third Division. Our base camp was at Rumah Nyala in Sungai Sut, but field research was carried on in many other parts of the Baleh region—particularly in the headwaters of the Mujong. Visits were also made to Iban communities of the lower, middle and upper Rejang, the Katibas and Ngemah (in the Third Division), and of the Saribas and Ulu Batang Ai (in the Second Division). In studying agriculture many months were spent living on Iban farms, and this report is based on intensive first-hand observation; all of my investigations were carried on in the Iban language.

144 The Iban (or Sea Dayaks) belong to an ethnic stock which Haddon has called 141 Proto-Malay. In brief, they are a brachycephalic people (average C. I. 83) of 142 short stature (average height 5ft. 2½ins.), with black, lank hair and cinnamon 197 coloured skin. Iban culture is basically proto-Malayan in type. Howell, our greatest authority on the Iban language, had no hesitation in classing it as "a dialect of the wide spreading Malay language." However, it is a dialect which has become intermixed with words borrowed from the various Borneo tribes with which the Iban have come into contact. Again, the Iban language, although it does contain a number of words that are Sanskrit in origin, has not been influenced by Arabic as have the languages of the peninsular Malays and the Menangkabau of Sumatra.

161 In Sarawak to-day, the Iban are the predominant element in a highly hetero- 162 geneous population. The total population of Sarawak as disclosed by the census of 1947 was 546,385, and of this number 190,326 (or 34·8%) were Iban. The past century has been for the Iban an era of expansion and they are now scattered over most of the interior zone of Sarawak—from the Samarahan river in the First Division to the Limbang river in the Fifth Division, about four hundred miles away to the north-east. However, the main concentrations of Iban population are to be found in the Second and Third Divisions.

241 Formerly, all of the Iban of Sarawak were shifting cultivators growing their 177 *padi* on hillside clearings in the tropical rain-forest. To-day, there are a number of Iban communities (particularly in the lower reaches of the Lupar, Saribas and Rejang rivers) who derive their livelihood from the cultivation of wet *padi* in

[1] Leach, E. R., "Social Science Research in Sarawak," Colonial Research Studies No. 1, London, 1950.

1: Freeman E-5 (1949-1951)1955 OC6 Iban OC6

riverain and deltaic swamps into which they moved following the establishment of Brooke rule. Some of these down-river communities have been subjected to prolonged European contact which has profoundly modified their way of life. However, the majority of the Iban still live from fifty to a hundred miles from the coast in hilly country that is drained by fast-flowing rivers. Most of these hill tribes have been little influenced by the West and remain pagan and pre-literate. It is with these Iban of the hinterland that this report is chiefly concerned.

This report then, is primarily an account of Iban methods of shifting dry rice cultivation in pioneer areas. It is important to note that it deals—in particular—with conditions existing in the Baleh, and with the social behaviour and customs of the Ulu Ai Iban inhabiting this region. This means that proper safeguards must be observed before applying any of the findings of this report to other Iban areas. Nevertheless, the systems it describes are generally typical of most pioneer areas (i.e. areas where virgin jungle is still being felled and farmed), and probably of about fifty to sixty per cent of the Iban population of Sarawak.

Iban agriculture and Iban methods of land utilization can only be understood in relation to the various corporate groups that characterize Iban society. For this reason this report begins with a brief account of the principal features of Iban social organization. However, these introductory paragraphs are no more than the most summary of prolegomena to the sections dealing with agriculture and land usage that follow. A comprehensive analysis of Iban social structure is being prepared for publication.

Again, because of limitations of space, only passing reference has been made to the elaborate *padi* cult upon which Iban agriculture is based. Upon this fascinating and important subject I was able to collect a great mass of material and it is my intention to discuss it fully in a separate monograph, which will stand as a companion study to the present report. As Haddon truthfully observed: "It is characteristic of the Iban . . . . that the whole of their life is permeated with religious conceptions, and indeed no distinction can be drawn in their daily life between technical and religious operations: they are equally necessary." Certainly, it is only when the inter-dependence of economics, social organization and ritual is understood that there can be any genuine appreciation of the nature of Iban agricultural practice.

This report is concerned with a single aspect of Iban life: their system of agriculture. This was, of course, but one of the many topics studied during the period of my field work and in due course papers and monographs on many other facets of Iban society and culture will be prepared for publication.

I would like to express my appreciation of the many ways in which the Government of Sarawak facilitated my research work, and I am especially grateful to His Excellency, Sir Anthony Abell, K.C.M.G., for his action in approving an extension of my tour so that I might complete certain studies of Iban religion and pay brief visits to parts of the Second Division.

It is difficult to speak too highly of the hospitality and assistance given to both my wife and myself during our stay in Sarawak. In particular our gratitude is due to: Mr. and Mrs. B. Baughman (Methodist Mission, Kapit), Mr. and Mrs. J. F. Drake-Brockman (D.O., Kanowit), Mr. T. Harrisson, Mr. R. W. R. Miller (Director of Agriculture), Mr. and Mrs. W. Nias (N.O., Sibu and Betong), Mr. A. J. N. Richards, Mr. P. Ringkai, Mr. P. Smith (D.O., Kapit), Mr. I. A. N.

1: Freeman E-5 (1949-1951) 1955 OC6 Iban OC6

64. On subsequent occasions I tried, by more devious methods, to persuade individual Iban to let me survey their farms—but without success. I discovered however, that it was the surveyor's chain to which most objection was taken. By using a prismatic compass and a measuring line of fine twine, I did manage to make hurried and surreptitious surveys of several farms (*umai*), but finding myself under suspicion, I was obliged to abandon even this. Finally I resorted to pacing—with as nonchalant an air as I could command—and sights taken from the shelter of friendly stumps. Despite this ban on surveying, I was permitted to visit most of the farms of Rumah Nyala whenever I chose (provided, of course, that I obeyed the various *pemali*), and when it was found that I was seriously interested in Iban methods, I was invited to many more *padi* rituals than I had time to attend. It is when the *padi* is being sown, and during the early stages of growth that ritual prohibitions are at their most stringent, and during these periods two *bilek* families would not allow me to set foot on their farms, but in these cases, the prohibition (*pemali ngendik tegalan*) also applied to most of the other members of the long-house. Later in the year these restrictions were relaxed however, so that in course of time I was able to make repeated and detailed inspections of all farms. As will be seen later, repeated visits were always necessary, first to plot the area of jungle felled, and then to mark in the actual extent of the *padi* crop. In the course of successive visits I was able to compile a series of sketch maps. In almost all cases these maps were based on a series of measurements—by pacing—of the major dimensions of a farm, and then, the sketching in of its outline and other principal features, from several different vantage points (i.e. adjacent spurs and ridges). This method was aided by the fact that the boundaries of Iban farm plots are always very plainly demarcated against the surrounding jungle from which they have been cleared. In only two instances was it possible to make more elaborate surveys, and both were clandestine operations, undertaken soon after reaping had been completed. In general then, my data on farm acreages are based on sketch maps and careful estimates, not (as I had planned) on detailed plane-table surveys. In passing it may be noted that the survey of Iban hill farms is no easy task. Very often they are situated on extremely steep slopes (i.e. 35°—40°), broken by confined and precipitous gullies and cluttered with massive accumulations of fallen timber.

65. One of my leading reasons for selecting Rumah Nyala as the centre of my research was that all of its farms could be reached directly, and on foot, from the main long-house. For the Baleh region this is an unusual state of affairs. As already explained, each *bilek* family operates as an independent unit, and commonly the farms of a long-house community are scattered up and down the banks, and tucked away in the side streams, of a section of river from three to four miles in length. More often than not the river is broken by rapids and shoals which inhibit travel unless a well-manned canoe be available, and this is very difficult to come by when the Iban are living on their farms and pre-occupied with their *padi*. The farms of Rumah Koh, in the Ulu Baleh, for example, are strung out over several miles of river, and some of them are distant five or more

owners as well as the soul of the rice." Izikowitz continued his survey, using a lance instead of a pole—the spirits (so it was said) being afraid of the point of the lance; but within a few days the owner of the land did fall ill, and Izikowitz was absolutely forbidden to continue with his mapping. (Izikowitz, "Lamet," 1951, p. 282).

A Government surveyor, by exerting sufficient pressure, might possibly get his way, but an anthropologist could not afford to do this, for the success of his work depends on the maintenance of goodwill among the people he is living with and studying.

1: Freeman E-5 (1949-1951)1955 OC6 Iban OC6

hours (depending on the state of the water) from the main long-house. At Rumah Tungku, in the Sungai Tiau (a long-house of 50 *bilek* families), the farms were dispersed over an area of about 15 square miles, and the majority of them could only be reached by canoe. Similar conditions prevailed at most of the other long-houses which I visited, and had any of them been selected as a site for research, it would have been extremely difficult to have obtained a comprehensive view of the farming activities of the whole community. Rumah Nyala presented me with the great advantage of being able to move about at will, and the most distant of the farms could be reached in a tramp of about three hours. Another important consideration was that at Rumah Nyala a wide variety of different land was being cultivated, so that I was able to observe the felling and farming of primary, and many different types of secondary jungle, and to make valuable comparisons.

66. Iban agriculture, as may have become apparent, is an extremely complex subject. In particular, it is complicated by elaborate ritual acts and concepts which are all elements of cardinal importance. Throughout the agricultural cycle ritual and labour are inextricably interwoven. Every stage in the actual cultivation of the *padi* is accompanied by rites which, in Iban eyes, are vital to the success of a crop. This continuum is a formidable labyrinth of diverse elements, and its complexity poses difficult problems in description and presentation. For the purposes of this report, I propose to begin with a discussion of settlement patterns, and then pass on to the *padi* cycle, and the techniques employed by Iban cultivators. Other sections will be devoted to the economics of agriculture, and methods of land usage. In the course of the discussion, frequent reference will be made to the magico-religious beliefs and practices of the Iban, but no more than passing reference. On the *padi* cult of the Iban I was able to collect a great mass of information, for it is still a living reality. I plan to deal fully with this most important and fascinating subject in a separate monograph, which will stand as a supplement to this present report. It must constantly be borne in mind however, that all these elements are integral parts of a single process; indeed, only when the inter-dependence of economics, social organization and ritual are understood can there be any genuine appreciation of the nature of Iban agricultural practice.

Shifting Cultivation and Settlement Patterns

67. Shifting cultivation may be briefly defined as an economy of which the main characteristics are "rotation of fields rather than crops; clearing by means of fire; absence of draft animals and of manuring; use of human labour only; employment of the dibble stick . . . . ; short periods of soil occupancy alternating with long fallow periods."[1]

68. The practice of shifting cultivation means that each family unit requires for its subsistence an extensive area of land. When working in virgin jungle it is usual for the Iban to cultivate half or more of a farm for two years in succession, but with rare exceptions a proportion of new forest is felled each year. In secondary jungle, on the other hand, it is normal for the whole of the farmed area to be abandoned after one crop has been taken. Iban methods of land usage, as will be explained presently, are complex, but when land is finally allowed to revert to secondary growth, it is left for as long as possible, and this is often for a

[1]K. J. Pelzer, "Pioneer Settlement in the Asiatic Tropics: Studies in Land Utilization and Agricultural Colonization in Southeastern Asia," New York, 1945, p. 17. ("Other terms for shifting cultivation are field-forest economy and field-forest rotation").

1: Freeman E-5 (1949-1951)1955 OC6 Iban OC6

336. Large communities then, make for administrative convenience. But 000 inevitably, as we have seen, they also give rise to the *dampa* system, and tend to promote wasteful methods of land usage. Here, clearly, a choice must be made. In view of the serious threat of land degradation in Iban areas, I would recommend that the old policy of encouraging large settlements be abandoned, and that instead, small communities, better able to follow a rational cycle of cultivation, should be fostered. To-day, head-hunting is no longer a problem, and with the introduction of out-board engines communication has ceased to be the slow and laborious business it once was. Under these circumstances, 'administrative convenience' is a small advantage to put against 'the stabilization of shifting cultivation.' What I would suggest, as a preliminary step, is the removal of the ban on long-houses of under ten doors. This will at least make the way clear for the development of smaller communities better to adopt a rational system of land usage. In many cases, the setting up of smaller communities will be made difficult by the land tenure situation, but it should be Government policy to facilitate the process as much as possible. Again, it should also be Government policy to prevent long-house communities from becoming too large. As already remarked, there is a general drift of population from down-river to up-river areas; this should be controlled, and every attempt made to keep new communities small in size, and each in a carefully demarcated territory in which there is a proper population-land balance.

337. There are many ancillary aspects of the problem of shifting cultivation which have not been discussed in this report: topics such as the reclamation of degraded lands by the planting of fast-growing tree species,[1] the possibilities of terraced cultivation, the development of animal husbandry and mixed farming, and so on. This is not because these aspects of the problem are thought to be unimportant, but rather because they involve technical matters which lie beyond the competence of an anthropologist, and are best left to the attention of agricultural and forestry experts in Sarawak.

Conclusion

338. Shifting cultivation is probably the most difficult and complex problem 121 facing the Government of Sarawak to-day. It is also a most urgent problem. In the Annual Report of the Sarawak Department of Agriculture for 1948, it was pointed out that: "The urgency of the situation cannot be over-emphasized". With this opinion, the anthropologist—and anyone else acquainted with the facts —must concur. It is hoped that this report has at least contributed a body of facts that will lead to greater understanding of hill *padi* cultivation among the Iban, and that suggestions have been made that will help towards the general stabilization of shifting cultivation in pioneer areas. Particular notice has been given to the wasteful systems of land usage to which the Iban have become addicted; and the *pangkal*, *krukoh* and *dijap* methods of usage have been singled out for special condemnation. Above all else it is imperative that most strenuous attempts should be made to eradicate these prodigal practices. If this report does no more than focus attention on these deleterious methods of land usage—and so instigate a crusade against them—it will have served a useful purpose.

[1]Cf. Allsop, F., "Shifting Cultivation in Burma: Its Practice, Effects, and Control, and Its Use to Make Forrest Plantations," Proceedings of the Seventh Pacific Science Congress of the Pacific Science Association, Vol. VI, 1953, pp. 277-285.

3: Low G-5 (1844-1847) 1848
OC6 Iban OC6

CHAPTER VI.

SEA-DYAKS—TRIBES OF LUNDU, SAKARRAN, AND SAREBAS—DYAK HOUSES—LANGUAGE, RELIGION, AND SUPERSTITIONS—THE MANANG, OR VILLAGE DOCTOR—DRESS OF DYAKS AND OF THEIR WOMEN—SEVERAL OF THEIR CHIEFS—ANECDOTE OF ONE—HEAD-TAKING—GRATITUDE TO MR. BROOKE—PIRACY OF SEA-DYAKS—ITS SUPPRESSION—DYAK LAXITY OF MANNERS—THEIR LOVE OF THEIR CHILDREN—DUTIES AND LABOURS OF THE MEN AND WOMEN—CAPTIVE DYAK CHILDREN—COOKERY OF THE DYAKS—THEIR FUNERALS, AND FUNERAL CEREMONIES.

●121 In pursuance of the plan it is our intention to follow in describing the inhabitants of the island in the order in which they are best known to us, which will nearly correspond also with their relative political importance, the Dyaks next present themselves to our notice, sufficient we trust having been said to give the reader a general idea of the Malays of the coast of Borneo, and to leave on his mind a more favourable impression of the character of some of them than the nation generally has hitherto enjoyed.

101 The Dyaks appear to be divided by many customs and usages naturally into two classes, which have been called by Mr. Brooke, Land and Sea Dyaks; the latter appear to have been the more savage and powerful, the former

121 the more quiet and easily managed. Amongst the sea Dyaks the practice of preserving the heads of their enemies, anciently instituted that they might be kept

6: Freeman E-5 (1949-1951) 1958 OC6 Iban OC6

further, these apartments, although joined one to the other architecturally, are always the separate abodes of distinct and autonomous family groups. Indeed, the only parts of the whole long-house which are held in any sort of common ownership are the entry ladders; for the rest, every pile and every plank is privately owned by one of the community's component families. In a sense, then, the singular architecture of an Iban long-house is deceptive, for its gallery and its unbroken expanse of roof tend to cloak the fact that it is made up of a series of separate apartments, each of which is the property of a sovereign family group.

Among the various families which make up a long-house community there does always exist a network of relationships based on bilateral kinship. Thus, every family is always related cognatically to at least one of the other families of the community, usually to several, and quite often to many of them. However, it rarely, if ever, occurs that there is within a long-house community a degree of complete, or even nearly complete, inter-relatedness among its various family groups. Furthermore, an Iban long-house community is an open and not a closed group, for its component family groups are joined in free association from which withdrawal is always possible, and there is, indeed, a good deal of movement, year by year, from one long-house to another. As all this suggests, an Iban long-house community is a corporate group only in certain restricted ways. Thus a long-house community holds virtually no property in common ownership, nor is there collective ownership of farm land; and again, there is an absence of any kind of economic activity by the long-house as a corporate group. However, membership of a long-house does impose upon each family group many common duties and obligations, for it is universally accepted that the well-being of any long-house is dependent upon its ritual state, and for the maintaining of this all are responsible. In jural matters also the long-house community is a corporate entity, for all its family groups do place themselves under the jurisdiction of their *tuai rumah*, or house headman, whose principal duty is the safeguarding and administering of the customary law, or *adat*.

As these summary remarks suggest, the Iban long-house community, as such, presents a number of sociological problems of extraordinary interest. These problems I hope, in due time, to discuss, but in the present essay our attention will be confined to the independent family cells of which every long-house community is composed. Of these it may be claimed that they are the intrinsic and irreducible corporate groups of Iban society, and certainly, an understanding of them is an essential preliminary to the study of the wider structure of Iban society.

11:Freeman E-5 (1949-1951)1957 OC6 Iban OC6

chanced to visit a number of the more distant Iban communities of the Third Division where earthenware pots were still being made and used. The main purpose of this present paper is to give an account of the technique of pottery making as my wife and I observed it in an Iban long-house in the head-waters of the Mujong River of the Kapit District.[4]

Early in November, 1949, so that we might witness a set of major rituals (the chief of which were several *gawai kenyalang*, or hornbill rituals) we had travelled to Rumah Tungku (a long-house of 50 apartments) in the lower reaches of the Sungai Tiau, a stream that rises among the grotesque granite peaks of the Hose Mountains and flows away to the south-west to become one of the main tributaries of the Mujong. Soon after our arrival, while making a census of the families of Rumah Tungku, we noticed that many of the apartments contained stocks of earthenware pots. Blackened by soot, they stood in racks above the elevated cooking hearth (*dapur*) of the apartment, or hung in rotan casings from the hearth's side-posts. When we asked about them we were told that all the pots we had seen had been made by women of Rumah Tungku from local clays and by traditional Iban methods. In several parts of the Baleh region we had come across other long-houses where pots of Iban make were being used, but nowhere had we seen as many *priok tanah* as at Rumah Tungku.

Clearly pottery making was a flourishing local industry, and we resolved to find out what we could about it as soon as the *gawai* we had come to observe and study were at an end.

By Friday, 25th November, even the most elaborate of the *gawai* had been over for several days. Life in the long-house was gradually returning to normal and routine domestic tasks that had been pushed to one side because of preoccupation with ritual matters of high importance were slowly being taken up again. So it was that on the morning of that Friday we came across old Runin, seated on a mat at the edge of her section of the great gallery (*ruai*) of the long-house, making a clay pot. Here was the opportunity we had been hoping for: we sat down beside her and watched.

During the previous weeks we had seen a good deal of Runin. She was a charming old lady, full of good humour, and possessing an expert knowledge of the part Iban women play in *gawai*

12: Haddon & Start E-4 (no date) 1936 OC6 Iban OC6

PREFATORY NOTE

During the last half of December, 1898, I had the good fortune to be the guest of Mr R. Shelford, the Curator of the Sarawak Museum at Kuching. Most of my time in Kuching was spent in the Museum, where more especially I studied the fine collection of Iban cloths, as many patterns on the cloths were named. I took ninety-three photographs of sixty-nine cloths in the Museum and of some twenty cloths belonging to various people; more than two hundred sketches of patterns and designs were made of which the names were obtained.

I collected a few cloths and names, and subsequently purchased a large number of cloths from Dr Charles Hose, on which names had been affixed to their respective patterns and designs. These cloths I have given to the Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, University of Cambridge. There are, however, two or three cloths in the collection obtained from other sources.

This material, together with numerous data from other tribes, was accumulated in the hope that I should be in a position to study the decorative art of the natives of Sarawak, which ambitious scheme can now be only partially realized.

The Cambridge Museum thus possesses a fine representative collection of Iban cloths, consisting of 14 *kalambi*, jackets, 49 *bidang*, petticoats, 7 *sirat*, loin-cloths, 1 *bedong*, woman's girdle, 2 *dangdong*, shawls, and 11 *pua*, blankets; some 84 in all. These bear names of more than 1500 patterns and designs.

The British Museum possesses about the same number of Iban cloths. On the fifty-nine specimens purchased from Dr C. Hose there are comparatively few named patterns, and there are none on the cloths obtained from other sources.

The names on the foregoing cloths and those which I gathered in Sarawak afford a basis for a study of these interesting and beautiful fabrics.

I was fortunate to enlist the enthusiastic co-operation in this study of Miss Laura E. Start, M.Ed., Lecturer in the Education Faculty, Victoria

12: Haddon & Start E-4 (no date) 1936 OC6 Iban OC6

INTRODUCTION

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This study is based on the large collection of Sarawak cloths in the Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology at Cambridge. The equally large collection of cloths in the British Museum has also been examined by us, and we have compared the available specimens with the numerous photographs and sketches made by one of us in Sarawak. We therefore venture to claim that there is sufficient material for a preliminary study of this nature. There is a considerable number of designs and patterns which are not here mentioned and for most of them we do not know by what names they are called.

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Although some of the designs are sufficiently realistic to make identification possible, most of them are highly conventionalized. Indeed, in many cases it is almost impossible to see any resemblance between the design and the object it is intended to represent. No doubt some students will question whether there is any such connection, but we must remember that these are traditional representations which have been transmitted through very many generations and it could not be expected that a realistic treatment could often persist.

The Iban certainly admit that most of the designs or patterns are intended to represent some concrete object. Cloths that have been collected in different places and at various times show designs that resemble each other to a remarkable extent, and, furthermore, in most cases the Iban apply similar names to them. Every Iban cannot be expected to know the names of all the designs and patterns, so it is not surprising that identifications should occasionally vary. There are numerous tribes or groups of Iban and this fact may cause some discrepancy in the names given, not only in identification but through dialectic differences; added to this are divergencies in the spelling of words by the transcribers.

If a native is not sure what a pattern really means he will be apt to describe it as looking like some particular thing or as representing that thing. It is obvious that the nearest approach to certainty can only be attained by inquiry from the actual woman who made the pattern.

It sometimes happens that apparently very similar designs may have different names applied to them. These usually are simple designs or

15: Freeman E-5 (1949-1951) 1955 OC6 Iban OC6

INTRODUCTION.

In September, 1948, I was appointed to undertake anthropological research in Sarawak under the auspices of the Colonial Social Science Research Council. The Secretary of the Colonial Social Science Research Council laid down as follows the nature of my research work: "a study of a traditionally based, stable, Iban community based on shifting dry rice cultivation and not subject to undue land shortage.....as described in 'A Report on the Possibilities of a Social Economic Survey of Sarawak,' by Dr. E. R. Leach."

I arrived in Sarawak in January, 1949, and remained in the Colony until June, 1951. For most of this period I was working among the Iban of the Baleh region of the Kapit District of the Third Division. Our base camp was at Rumah Nyala in the Sungai Sut, but field research was carried on in many other parts of the Baleh region—particularly in the headwaters of the Sungai Mujong. Visits were also made to Iban communities of the lower, middle and upper Rejang, the Katibas and Ngemah—in the Third Division, and of the Saribas and Ulu Batang Ai—in the Second Division.

This report is primarily an account of Iban methods of shifting dry rice cultivation in pioneer areas. It is important to note that it deals—in particular—with conditions existing in the Baleh, and with the social behaviour and customs of the Ulu Ai Iban inhabiting this region. This means that proper safeguards must be observed before applying any of the findings of this report to other Iban areas. Nevertheless, the systems it describes are generally typical of most pioneer areas (i.e. areas where virgin jungle is still being felled and farmed), and probably of about fifty to sixty percent of the Iban population of Sarawak.

Iban agriculture and Iban methods of land utilization can only be understood in relation to the various corporate groups which characterise Iban society. For this reason it has been necessary to examine briefly the principal features of Iban social organization, and the first two sections of this report are devoted to a description and analysis of the Iban *bilek-family* and the Iban long-house community. These however are really no more than prolegomena to the sections dealing with agriculture and land usage. In future studies I plan to discuss Iban social structure in greater detail, for an analysis of its basic principles is an essential foundation to the understanding of all Iban social, ritual and economic institutions.

Again, from considerations of space only passing reference has been made to the elaborate *padi* cult upon which Iban agriculture is based. Upon this fascinating and important subject I was able to collect a great mass of material and it is my intention to discuss it fully in a separate monograph, which will stand as a companion volume to this present report. As Haddon truthfully observed: "It is characteristic of the Iban.....that the whole of their life is permeated with religious conceptions, and indeed no distinction can be drawn in their daily life between technical and religious operations: they are equally necessary." It is only when the inter-dependence of economics, social organization and ritual is understood that there can be any genuine appreciation of the nature of Iban agricultural practice.

This report is concerned chiefly with a single aspect of Iban life: their system of agriculture. It should perhaps be mentioned that it represents but one of the many problems studied during the period of my field work. I intend in due course to prepare monographs and papers on many other facets of Iban society and culture. Among the subjects which I hope to discuss are: kinship and marriage, political structure, legal institutions, religious beliefs and ritual institutions, magic, spirit medium cults, head-hunting, birth rites, death rites and the cult of the dead, weaving, dreams, systems of augury, tattooing, and many other minor topics.

I would like to express my appreciation of the various ways in which the Government of Sarawak facilitated my research work, and I am especially grateful to His Excellency Mr. A. F. Abell, C.M.G., for his action in approving an extension of my tour so that I might complete certain studies of Iban religion, and pay brief visits to parts of the Second Division.

It is difficult to speak too highly of the general hospitality, assistance and advice given to both my wife and myself during the course of our stay in Sarawak. In particular our gratitude is due to: Mr. and Mrs. B. Baughman (of the Methodist Mission, Kapit), Mr. J. C. H. Barcroft (Resident, Third Division), Father Barry (of the R.C. Mission, Kanowit), Mr. and Mrs. R. A. Bewsher (Kanowit), Mr. and Mrs. D. L. Bruen (D.O., Simanggang), Mr. W. P. N. L. Ditmas (Resident, Second Division), Mr. and Mrs. J. F. Drake-Brockman (D.O., Kanowit), Mr. and Mrs. J. Goatley (British Council, Kuching), Mr. T. Harrisson (Government Ethnologist and Curator of the Sarawak Museum), Mr. B. A. St. J. Hepburn, Mr. and Mrs. J. Hughes, Mr. D. L. Leach (Director of Lands and Surveys), Mr. C. Lightley, Mr. R. W. R. Miller (Director of Agriculture), Mr. R. H. Morris (D.O., Mukah), Mr. and Mrs. L. K. Morse (Resident, Third Division), Mr. and Mrs. William Nias (N. O., Sibu and Betong), Mr. R. Rennick, Mr. A. J. N. Richards (D.O., Kapit), Mr. P. Ringkai, Mr. P. Smith (D.O., Kapit), Mr. B. E. Smythies (Forestry Officer, Third Division), Mr. I. A. N. Urquhart (D.O., Kapit), Mr. and Mrs. A. C. Waine (D. O., Sibu), and Dr. and Mrs. E. H. Wallace (Medical Officer, Third Division).

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A husband and wife always live together as members of the same household; indeed, the conjugal tie is the only relationship - affinal or cognatic - which invariably occurs within the confines of the bilek family. The conjugal tie may be looked on then as the keystone of the bilek family. In particular, it is important to realize that a bilek family in the arrangement of its affairs has available to it the cognates of all its members, both natal and affinal. From the point of view of the senior natal members of a bilek, the cognates of an in-married member are kaban tanpil, or affines; but to the children of the marriage they are part of these children's personal kindreds, or kaban pandai. In this way, as generation succeeds generation, affinal relationships become cognatic relationships and part of the network that forms the wider kinship structure of Iban society.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

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Social structure theory as it has been developed over recent years has been predominantly concerned with societies having unilineal descent groups. In this field valuable results have been attained. In comparison our understanding of cognatic or bilateral societies (which are not very much less numerous) is lamentable.[37] Preoccupation with unilineal descent systems can lead to dangerously lop-sided views of social structure in general, as, for example in Radcliffe Brown's assertion that "unilineal institutions in some form are almost, if not entirely, a necessity in any ordered social system."[38] Although thorough studies may still be sparse we do know enough about some of the several hundred bilateral societies still in existence to be able to demonstrate that there are a number of solutions alternative to unilineal descent all of which result in ordered social systems. The Iban solution in which

114 family corporations are perpetuated by a system of utrolateral
121 filiation is one of them. This type of family, supported as it is by the ramifying cognatic kinship structure of the Iban does result, beyond any question, in an ordered social system. Furthermore, if the expansion of the Iban people during the past 150 years of their history be any criterion, it is also an efficient system.[39]

It would be of the greatest interest for social anthropological theory if a detailed comparative study of the morphology of bilateral kinship systems could be undertaken. Unfortunately, the dearth of modern structural analyses prevents this. Many of the world's bilateral societies are to be found in Southeast Asia and the Insular Pacific. It is to be hoped that research in these regions during the coming years will provide the materials for a comparative analysis of bilateral social structures of the kind already achieved for the unilineal systems of Africa.[40]

17:Bedford D-5 (1958) 1959 OC6 Iban OC6

Sea Dayak Diet: A Longhouse Survey

by

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During the last two and a half years I have carried out several tours of Sea Dayak areas in the Second Division visiting three or four houses each day. It was soon realised that such tours furnished only very superficial information regarding the general level of health and nutrition of these people and the prevalence of disease from which they suffer. The present study was undertaken to enquire into these questions more closely.

Rumah Bujak at Nanga Pruan was chosen for the study. The reasons for this were its proximity to Simanggang and the fact that this house is fortunate in having a very active, enterprising headman so that willing co-operation from the people of the longhouse was to be expected throughout the period of study.

From the 2nd February to the 29th November, 1958, the longhouse was visited every Saturday or Sunday by a team usually comprising the Divisional Medical Officer, a hospital assistant, laboratory technician, one or more hospital attendants and one or more trained *ulu* dressers. Sick people were examined each week, either treated on the spot or sent to Simanggang for outpatient or inpatient treatment as indicated. In addition the investigations to be described below were carried out during these weekly visits.

Rumah Bujak, Pruan

Before presenting the results of the study a brief description will be given of the longhouse and the way of life of the people who live in it.

The people of Rumah Bujak come originally from Sungai Pinggai on the Undup River. The Undup is a moderately large left branch of the Batang Lupar, the mouth of which is about twenty minutes' journey by outboard upriver from Simanggang. Sungai Pinggai is a further three hours' journey up the Undup by outboard.

18:Sutlive E,M-5 (1957-1971) 1973 OC6 Iban OC6
Sibu

INTRODUCTION

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The purpose of this study is to describe and analyze the Ibans of the Sibu District of Sarawak against the background of Sibu Town,[1] a developing administrative center and entrepot. Historically, there has been a close relationship between the growth of the Iban population in the district and the development of the town, and it is impossible to understand the one apart from the other.

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This study attempts to contribute to the growing and much-needed literature on urbanization in Southeast Asia, and in Part I we deal with the factors involved in Sibu's rise as an urban center. While some excellent works have been done on urbanization in Africa, India, Latin America and East Asia, and on Southeast Asia in general, the region is wanting of detailed studies of urbanization as a form of adaptation. Precisely because urbanization is a form of human adaptation, it cannot be defined by residence patterns alone or by delineation of boundaries between urban and rural areas. In the activities of market

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[1] Hereinafter, unless otherwise indicated, Sibu refers to the town.

/2/ trade and administration, new values are disseminated, people perceive new orientations to power structures, and concepts of time and space are changed as well as settlement patterns.

The recent take-off of Sibu as an urban center and the contemporary movement of Ibans into the town, whether temporarily or more permanently, permit us to deal with a number of questions that have been raised with regard to urbanization in Southeast Asia. For example, what are the effects of urbanization on indigenous society and culture? Is the in-migration of indigenes resulting from and in structural and cultural changes, and if so, what is the nature of these changes? What is the effect of urbanization on traditional and neo-traditional institutions, such as the family, kin-group, longhouse community and form of marriage? What are the factors involved in the decisions of indigenes to move to urban areas? What is the nature of interaction between members of different ethnic groups in rural and urban contexts?

[128] In Part II we shall analyze the adaptation, social organization and culture of the Ibans of this district. While there are many similarities between the Ibans who are subjects of this study and those of the Sut described by Freeman (1955; 1970), there also are important differences reflecting in part the earlier time when Freeman's study [177] was made, and in part the disparate settings. Unlike the far more isolated Ibans of the Sut, who are today in many respects as Freeman

121 177 found them twenty years ago, the Ibans of the Sibu District have accommodated to numerous influences that have been introduced to them, and especially within the past twenty years.

175 166 177 The movement of the Ibans into this district has occurred within the past 125 years. When James Brooke arrived in Sarawak, the movements of the Ibans into the southern tributaries of the Rejang were just beginning. Entering from the south, they soon invaded the land north of the Rejang, driving out or subduing and assimilating the former inhabitants.

In his program of pacification, James Brooke established Fort Brooke in 1862 at the point of the division of the Rejang and Igan Rivers. [439] Under the protection of the fort, the point soon became a nexus for trade between Chinese, Ibans, Malays, Melanaus and others. From the beginning of the center, Ibans have both served and been served by the trade carried on there.

361 177 Today, few Ibans in the district live more than two hours travel from the town which is accessible to them by private boats, public launches and ferries, cars, taxis and buses. Their adaptation has been influenced by the development of the town as an administrative center, entrepot, and by acculturation to the values mediated through residents and visitors.

18:Sutlive E,M-5 (1957-1971) 1973 OC6 Iban OC6 Sibu

166 178 Although there has been a long association between the Ibans and Sibu, the in-migration of relatively large numbers has taken place only within the past decade. The factors involved in this in-migration are numerous and complex as will become apparent. On the one hand, they are related to the problems of making a living according to the level of new expectations in many rural areas. On the other hand, they include the attractions and amenities of life in the pasar, or trading center, of education, wage-earning and escape from the farm.

121 177 In keeping with the bifocal perspective of this study, the approach taken is a regional one, i.e., one in which the development of Sibu is seen in the context of the area from where its resources have come, and in the interplay between inhabitants of the urban center and rural hinterland. The rationale for this approach is that the emergence and development of Sibu can be understood only within the setting of the area from where products extracted from forest, farm and garden have supported the life of the urban residents. The townspeople, in turn, have supplied not only the goods needed and wanted by rural residents but also have interacted with them in an exchange of values and norms which have been influential in the structural and cultural changes that have occurred among rural residents.

121 While the attempt to take the regional approach may appear presumptuous, deviating from more traditional anthropological approaches,

121 and in contrast to the position of Gluckman and the "Manchester School," yet the alternatives of considering the Iban population of either the urban area or the rural area to the neglect of the other would have seriously biased the data which reveal a regional pattern of interaction and warrant the juxtaposition of the urban and the rural populations in a single study.

12 The regional approach involved an historical study of Sibu Town and District, based upon materials available in the Sarawak Museum Archives, Kuching, the Sibu District Office, and various government departments. Long-time residents of the area were interviewed, including Tuba Apai Billy, a renowned lemambang ("bard") of Rawang Assan, and two of the original Chinese settlers, Lin Wen Tsung and Ling Kai Ching. Using data obtained from these and other sources it was possible to describe the demographic patterns and economic bases of the region.

Traditional anthropological techniques such as participant observation and work with key informants permitted a social structural analysis in both rural and urban areas. Surveys were made in 37 longhouses to determine, among other things, the age and quality of the house, relative sufficiency in rice production, composition of the bilik-family, evidence of longhouse fragmentation and changes in residence patterns. Concentrated studies were made on four houses: Rumah Nyala of Sungai

12 Aup, Rumah Imba and Rumah Nyelang of Salim, and Rumah Gaong of Sengan. The studies of these four houses included collection of genealogies, the inter-relatedness of bilik-families and a longitudinal analysis of their fluctuations, as well as economic and ritual activities of the members of each house.

Census data collected in 1958 and 1966 were available in the District Office for most of the 37 houses surveyed, and for the houses in the areas of Pengulu Chat and Pengarah Chundi for 1970. A major problem encountered in the research was the absence of recent census materials. Consequently, censuses were carried out in 1970 on those houses not covered in the 1970 materials available. A survey was conducted of 200 residents of Sibu Town to determine their backgrounds, education, employment, incidence and forms of help for parents, and factors involved in their movement into Sibu. Questionnaires designed to assess the effects of education on residence patterns and employment were mailed to former Iban secondary school students of whom 143 returned the forms.

Using the technique of intensive interviewing, I collected life histories from nine Ibans. Combining this information with personal observations, it was possible to describe and analyze verbally and graphically the social networks of these individuals and their families.

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/2/ By tracing the social networks and activity fields[2] of representative individuals, it was possible to determine the ties with fellow townsmen, Ibans and members of other ethnic groups as well, with kinsmen and friends from rural communities, and the nature and frequency of interactions. The uses of the concepts of network and activity field in combination appear to be especially fruitful in studies of urbanisation; for example, in the present study they revealed the high frequency of inter-ethnic relations in contrast to other situations described by authors in which the ethnic groups appear as bounded entities with but minimal or no interaction.

The concept and use of network appears potentially as valuable to anthropology as the genealogical method has been.[3] The idea is indispensable in the study of urbanization and social change. For, in

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[2] By an activity field I mean an egocentric system which may be delineated by social, economic, political or other types of relationships. A network, on the other hand, is defined by the totality of all units connected by a certain type of relationship. It is sociocentric rather than egocentric. A network subsumes all the activity fields of the constituent units.

[3] In a study of social change in India, Srinivas and Beteille (1964) have discussed the value of the concept of network in analyzing increasing social mobility in Indian society. After noting the inadequacy of the traditional social structural model to comprehend a complex society such as India, the authors describe the maintenance of effective networks among kinsmen and the development of extended networks in new inter-personal relations.

(2) tracing out the activity fields of selected actors the anthropologist is able to discover the nature of social relations, bases upon which they are formed and maintained, principles involved in decision-making, and differences in relations in rural and urban environments.

Finally, an attempt has been made to analyze the culture of those Ibans with whom I have lived and worked. This analysis was based upon Iban myths and rituals, in the broadest sense of the terms, as collected by the author and from other sources as well. The cultural analysis is an attempt to determine the values and belief-systems, the norms, goals and ideals of the Ibans by which they have related to their environment. Taken together with the previous analyses - economic, demographic, structural and of the social networks - the analysis of the culture of the Ibans provides further insights into their traditional values and new values being mediated through the urban center.

Although the term "Iban" often is used generally in this paper and, indeed, much of what is contained herein has applicability to Iban society and culture, my study is based upon research in the Sibu District. I am certain that anecdotal vetoes may be adduced to numerous points, with statements to the effect that Ibans in other areas and situations are different. To this I would respond with agreement, for it was a perceptive Iban who once said, "All of us Ibans, in every house, are

121 different" (Samoa kami Iban, alam tiap buah rumah, sigi' lain). Once again I would emphasize that this study is of the Ibans of the Sibu District, based upon research done in urban and rural areas on a sample of houses and individuals.

104 The spelling of Iban words in this paper follows the orthography as worked out by the Inter-Church Committee on Translation. In one point I have deviated from that orthography, by indicating glottalization with the use of an apostrophe ('). While this is not necessary for native Iban speakers, it may prove helpful to non-native speakers.

[436/171] The rate of exchange at the time of writing was slightly less than three Malaysian dollars to one American dollar.